



Successful interview reveals candidate talent

About a year ago, Gila Corp., an Austin, Texas company that handles outsourced collections, payment processing and call center services, hired its first blind employee, Phillip Gross, to be a reporting specialist for the Client Relations group.

It wasn't by design, says Gloria Martinez, PHR, director of human resources. "He found us through our Craigslist ad," she says. "We were not focused on actively recruiting a visually impaired applicant, but rather the most qualified applicant."

Gross had been job hunting for more than a year. According to Martinez, he outperformed approximately 300 sighted candidates for one of the eight open positions. "His level of work experience, his technical knowledge and the actual interview is what impressed us."

In the interview, Gross presented himself as being knowledgeable about the business and was professional in his demeanor. He was open about his disability and offered suggestions about how he could adapt to the requirements.

"He mentioned the use of a software program that would allow him to accomplish the job functions," Martinez says.

Gross' ability to put people at ease helped him ace the interview.

"I would be stretching the truth," Martinez admits, "if I were to say that there was not a moment of awkwardness; however, once you meet him, it passes. You forget that he is not a sighted person."

Both Philip Gross and Gila Corp. are succeeding in their newfound relationship. Gross has received outstanding recognition for his work performance and the company benefits from his productivity.